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UNCLAS MAPUTO 000122

SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: CHISSANO PRAISES U.S.-MOZAMBIQUE TIES
FOLLOWING PRESIDENT BUSH'S INAUGURATION

1. On January 21, all official media, including radio and television, carried President Chissano's upbeat comments about the state of U.S.-Mozambican relations. Chissano spoke with reporters on January 19 at the Foreign Ministry, during a ceremony in his honor. The official daily Noticias (circulation 25,000, readership 250,000) published the story on its inside international news page headlined, "Chissano Confident about American Foreign Policy." An informal translation of the Portuguese original follows.

2. BEGIN TRANSLATION: Outgoing Mozambican President Joaquim Chissano expressed confidence Thursday in Maputo that U.S. foreign policy toward Africa and especially Mozambique will remain unchanged, since President remains in office, and (even) if policy were to change, it would be for the better. Reacting to the inauguration yesterday of Bush for his second and last term, Chissano said that the American government has effected a good foreign policy.
"I think that nothing is happening in Mozambique that might be a reason for concern on the part of the United States; to the contrary, that country's relationship with Mozambique has been viewed as benefiting the United States in the region and throughout the continent." For the Mozambican statesman, relations between the two countries will continue in the same direction, and he referred to the fact that President Bush has on various occasions expressed his admiration for our country and his desire that we make greater progress.
"Even if there are differences over one or another point, I think that we are going to continue with good relations," said Chissano, who will end his service as Chief of State next February, a position he has held since 1986. END TRANSLATION
LA LIME